



SADDLEBACK
EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING

Saddleback's
Illustrated Classics™

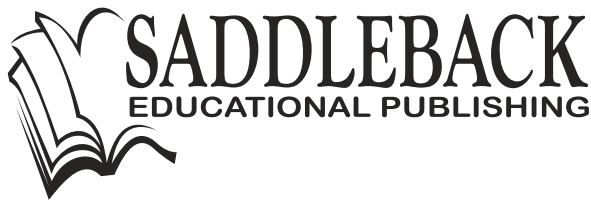
The Scarlet Letter

NATHANIEL
HAWTHORNE



The Scarlet Letter

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE



Saddleback's *Illustrated Classics*™



Three Watson

Irvine, CA 92618-2767

Website: www.sdlback.com

Copyright © 2006 by Saddleback Educational Publishing. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the written permission of the publisher.

ISBN 1-56254-936-7

Printed in China

Welcome to Saddleback's *Illustrated Classics*TM

We are proud to welcome you to Saddleback's *Illustrated Classics*TM. Saddleback's *Illustrated Classics*TM was designed specifically for the classroom to introduce readers to many of the great classics in literature. Each text, written and adapted by teachers and researchers, has been edited using the Dale-Chall vocabulary system. In addition, much time and effort has been spent to ensure that these high-interest stories retain all of the excitement, intrigue, and adventure of the original books.

With these graphically *Illustrated Classics*TM, you learn what happens in the story in a number of different ways. One way is by reading the words a character says. Another way is by looking at the drawings of the character. The artist can tell you what kind of person a character is and what he or she is thinking or feeling.

This series will help you to develop confidence and a sense of accomplishment as you finish each novel. The stories in Saddleback's *Illustrated Classics*TM are fun to read. And remember, fun motivates!

Overview

Everyone deserves to read the best literature our language has to offer. Saddleback's *Illustrated Classics*[™] was designed to acquaint readers with the most famous stories from the world's greatest authors, while teaching essential skills. You will learn how to:

- Establish a purpose for reading
- Use prior knowledge
- Evaluate your reading
- Listen to the language as it is written
- Extend literary and language appreciation through discussion and writing activities

Reading is one of the most important skills you will ever learn. It provides the key to all kinds of information. By reading the *Illustrated Classics*[™], you will develop confidence and the self-satisfaction that comes from accomplishment—a solid foundation for any reader.

Step-By-Step

The following is a simple guide to using and enjoying each of your *Illustrated Classics*[™]. To maximize your use of the learning activities provided, we suggest that you follow these steps:

1. ***Listen!*** We suggest that you listen to the read-along. (At this time, please ignore the beeps.) You will enjoy this wonderfully dramatized presentation.
2. ***Pre-reading Activities.*** After listening to the audio presentation, the pre-reading activities in the Activity Book prepare you for reading the story by setting the scene, introducing more difficult vocabulary words, and providing some short exercises.
3. ***Reading Activities.*** Now turn to the “While you are reading” portion of the Activity Book, which directs you to make a list of story-related facts. Read-along while listening to the audio presentation. (This time pay attention to the beeps, as they indicate when each page should be turned.)
4. ***Post-reading Activities.*** You have successfully read the story and listened to the audio presentation. Now answer the multiple-choice questions and other activities in the Activity Book.

Remember,

“Today’s readers are tomorrow’s leaders.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nathaniel Hawthorne, an American romance writer, was born in Salem, Massachusetts in 1804. He was educated at Bowdoin College in Maine and was the most distinguished craftsman of the New England school of letters. He led a quiet life, removed from the activities of his times, in a restless solitude. Because of his passionless upbringing, he had a strong pride and sense of alienation from the world in which he lived.

At age forty-five he wrote a story which had long been stored in his mind—*The Scarlet Letter*. At last he found success. Written with intense gloom and great indifference, Hawthorne's restlessness can easily be felt throughout the novel.

Even though Hawthorne's concern is always with what is ethical, only rarely does his imagination join with creative passion. More frequently you will find just a hint of emotion.

Saddleback's *Illustrated Classics*™

The Scarlet Letter

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

THE MAIN CHARACTERS



Arthur
Dimmesdale



Roger
Chillingworth



Hester
Prynne



Pearl



Governor Bellingham



One quiet, rainy day I made a discovery—a small package wrapped in old paper. The object that most caught my attention was a bit of fine red cloth decorated with gold. It was the capital letter A. I happened to place it on my chest. I felt burning heat—as if it were not red cloth, but red-hot iron. I trembled and let it fall to the floor. I examined the papers to find the story that lay behind this strange letter.

On a summer morning in 1642, most of the people of the town of Boston, Massachusetts, were gathered before the jail. It was an angry Puritan crowd. Their eyes were glued to the strong, oaken prison door.



The women seemed to take a special interest.



If this woman stood up for judgment before us five, would she come off with such a sentence as the judges have given? I think not!



The judges are too easy, that is the truth.

At least, they should have marked her forehead with a hot iron!



Why do we talk of marks?



She has brought shame upon us all and ought to die!



Be quiet, women! The door is opening!



The door was flung open. Like a black shadow, the town crier appeared.



He led a young woman toward the door.



The hussy! She uses her skill with the needle to laugh in our faces!



We should strip her gown off her shoulders.



Give a piece of my old red flannel to make a more fitting letter. She wears the scarlet letter of a sinner as if it were an honor instead of a curse.



Open a passage, and Mistress Prynne shall be set where man, woman, and child may have a sight of her mark of sin!



Come along, Mistress Hester, and show your scarlet letter in the marketplace!



A lane was opened through the crowd, and Hester Prynne walked towards the place set for her punishment.

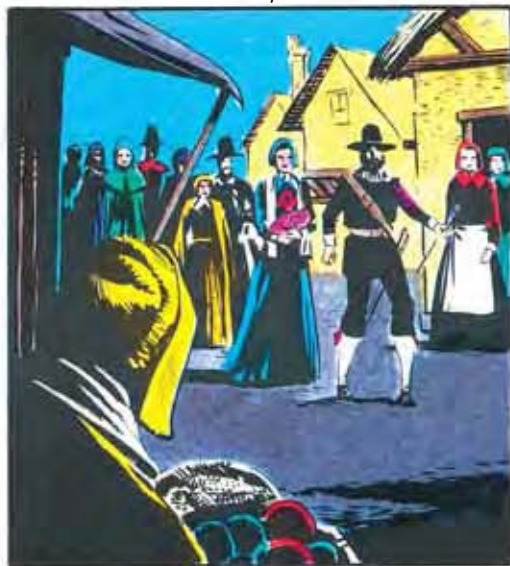


Schoolboys ran in front, staring up into her face.



Though every step was torture, she passed through this part of her punishment with outward calm, and reached the marketplace.

Knowing what to do, she climbed a flight of wooden steps.

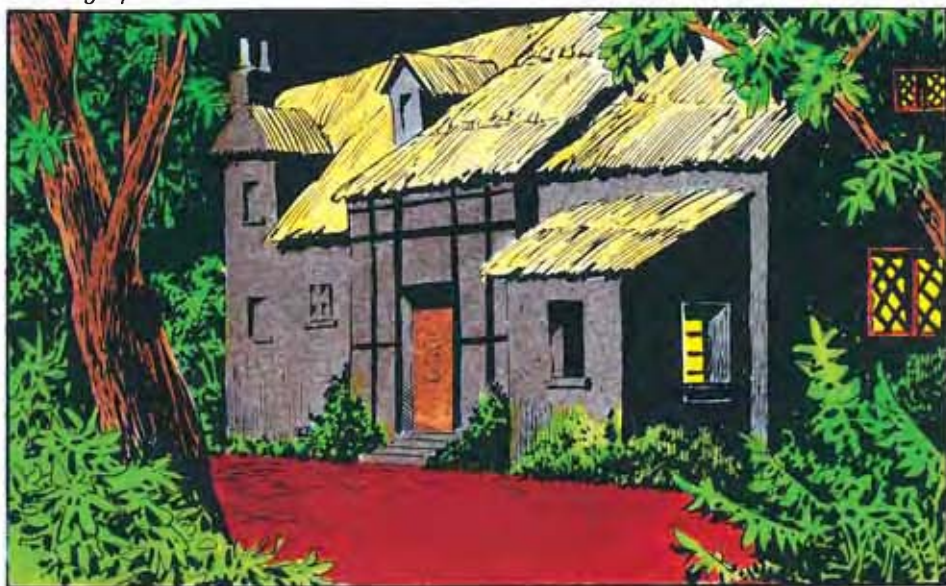


There she stood for everyone to see. She felt at times, as if she must cry out, and throw herself from the scaffold, or else go mad.



Yet there were times when the whole scene seemed to disappear. She saw, instead, the path along which she had been walking since she was a little girl.

In her mind she saw again the village in which she was born in Old England, and her home: an old, poor house of gray stone, now falling apart.



She saw her father's face. . . .

Her mother's too, with its look of love. . . .

She saw her own face in the mirror in which she had so often looked.



There was another face in her memory—thin and intelligent. He was an older man with his left shoulder higher than his right—a new life seemed to wait for her.



Now she stood here. Could it be true? She held the child until it cried. She looked down at the scarlet letter and touched it. Yes! The baby and the shame were real. All else had disappeared.

To help her forget, she looked over the crowd. On its outer edge, two men caught her eye: an Indian, and beside him a white man dressed in a strange mixture of civilized and savage clothes.



At the sight of the white man, Hester drew back. Her eyes met his across the crowd. He raised his finger and put it to his lips.

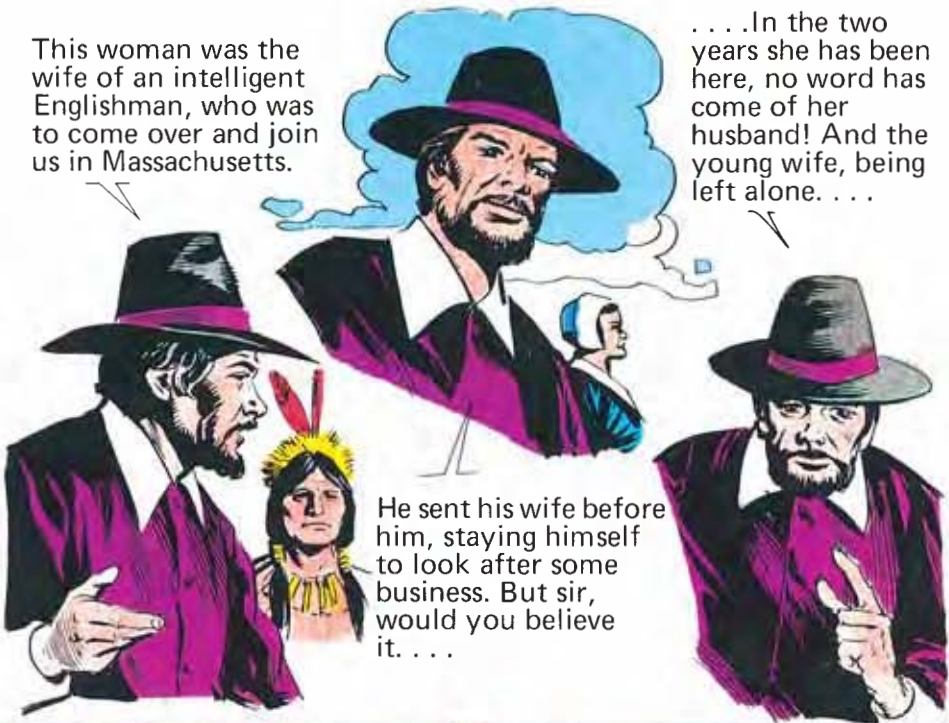


I am a stranger. I have met with sad adventures by sea and land, and have been held captive by the Indians. Will you tell me of this woman's crimes?



This woman was the wife of an intelligent Englishman, who was to come over and join us in Massachusetts.

... In the two years she has been here, no word has come of her husband! And the young wife, being left alone. . . .



He sent his wife before him, staying himself to look after some business. But sir, would you believe it. . . .

Aha! I see. So wise a husband should have learned this too in his books! And who is the babe's father?



That is a riddle! Mistress Prynne refuses to name him.

The husband should come himself to solve the mystery.

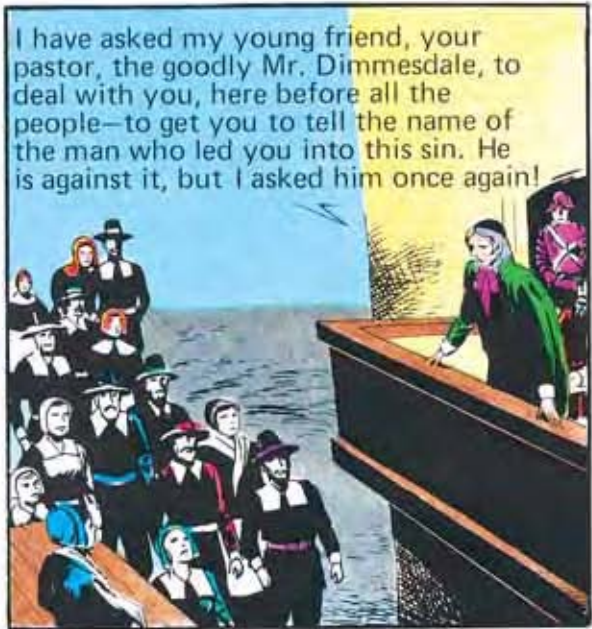


Most likely he is at the bottom of the sea. That is why our good judges, instead of asking for her death, have only asked that she stand here for three hours—and wear the scarlet letter for the rest of her life.

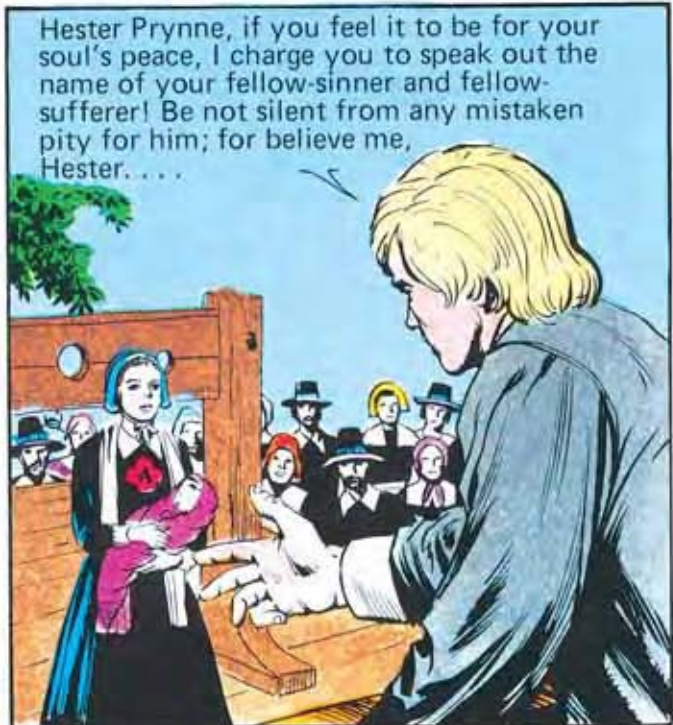
Hester was awakened from her thoughts by a voice.



It was the voice of John Wilson, the oldest clergyman of Boston.



This appeal drew all eyes to the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale. Though very intelligent and a fine speaker, he was nervous and shy and liked to avoid attention. He now stepped forward.





Everyone liked the young pastor's sweet, rich voice. Even the baby felt its influence, and held up its little arms toward him.



And so, her secret still her own, Hester Prynne was led back to prison.

Returned to prison, Hester was in a state of nervous excitement that could not be calmed.



The baby shared her trouble.

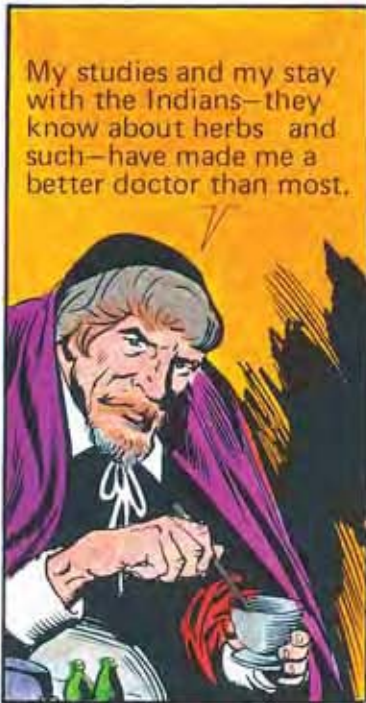


The jailer, afraid she might harm herself or the baby, brought in Dr. Chillingworth.



Leave me alone with my patient, good jailer.





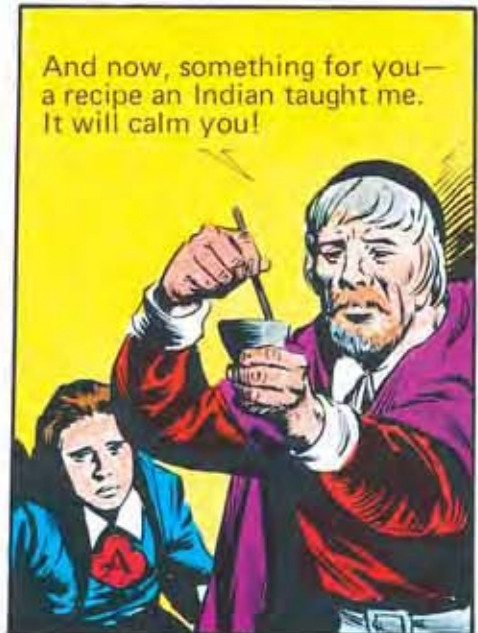
Here, woman! Give the babe this medicine.

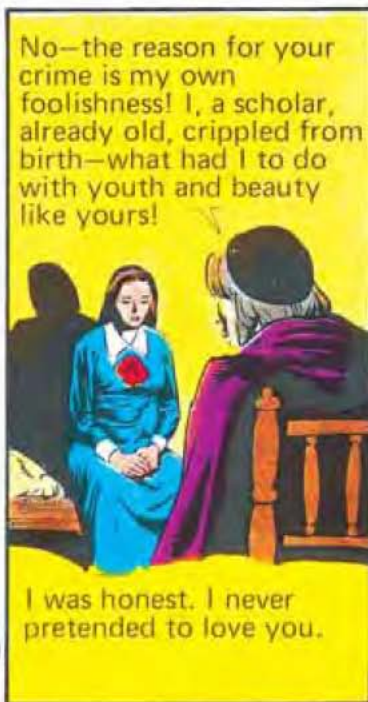
No! Would you take revenge on an innocent baby?



Foolish woman! The medicine will help the baby. I'll give it myself.

Soon, its pain gone, the baby sank into a healthy sleep.





We have wronged
each other. We are
even. But the man
lives who has wronged
us both!



I mean him no harm. Let him live! Let him hide himself! But I will find him out. Meanwhile, as you keep his secret, keep mine. Tell no one I am your husband.



Why do you ask it?

Perhaps I don't wish to be known as the husband of a sinful woman. For whatever reason, swear to keep my secret!

I swear it!



And now I leave you—alone with your infant, and the scarlet letter—and perhaps your nightmares!

Why do you smile so? Have you led me into a promise that will prove the ruin of my soul?



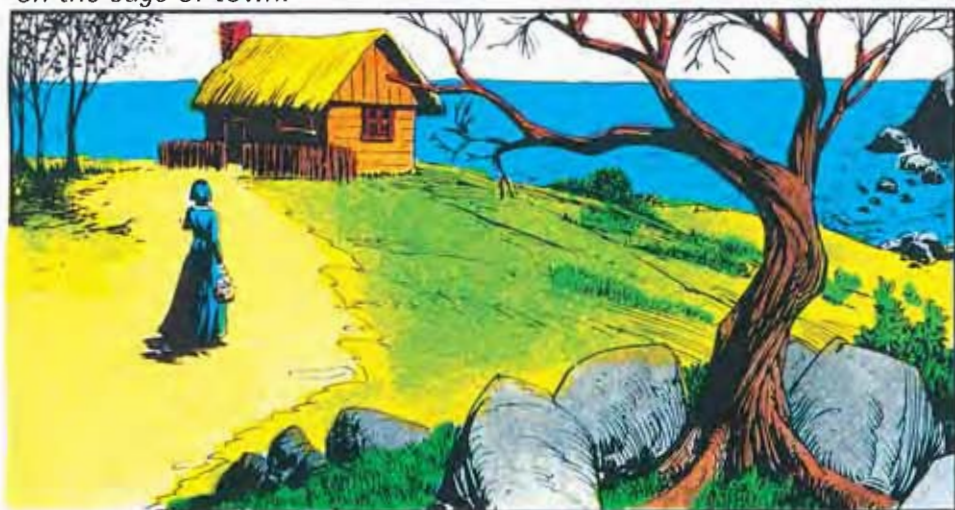
Not your soul, Hester. No, not yours!



Hester's term in jail came to an end. To her sick heart, it seemed as if the outside sunshine was meant only to show the scarlet letter.



With the permission of the judges, she moved into a lonely cottage on the edge of town.



In this little lonesome house she moved in with her child, little Pearl.



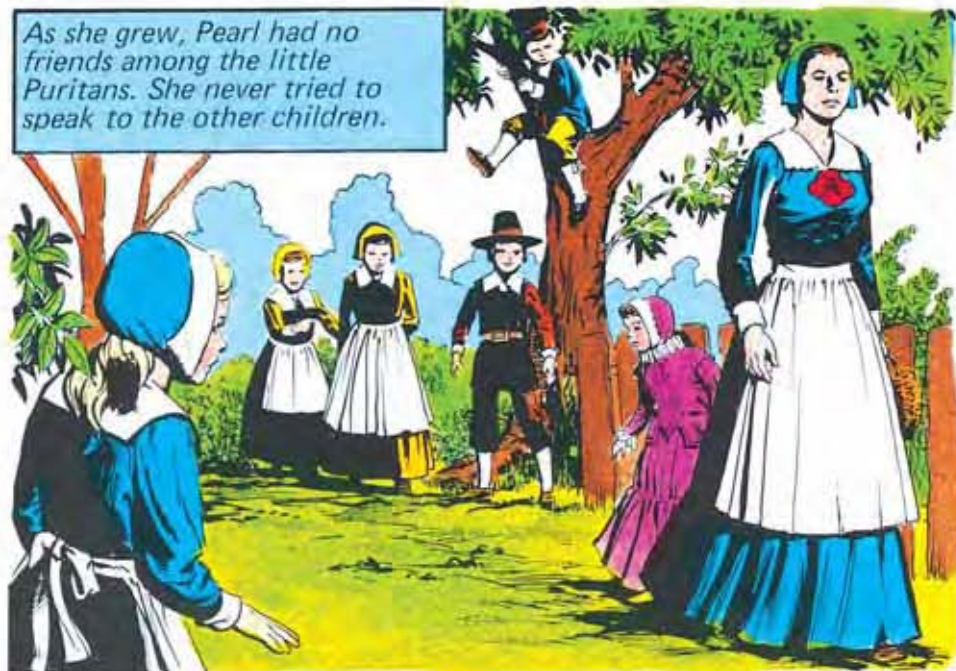
At the art of needlework, Hester was an expert. This skill filled a need in the village by which she could provide an income for herself and Pearl.

One day as Hester bent over the candle, Pearl's eyes were caught by the gold on the letter A. Putting up her little hand, she grabbed it, laughing!



Thus the first object Pearl seemed to notice in her life was the scarlet letter.

As she grew, Pearl had no friends among the little Puritans. She never tried to speak to the other children.



If they gathered around her, as they sometimes did. . . .

She would chase them and throw stones at them.



But at home, she had many games and playmates.



The black and solemn pine trees became older Puritans whom she laughed at.

The ugliest weeds of the garden were their children whom she struck down.



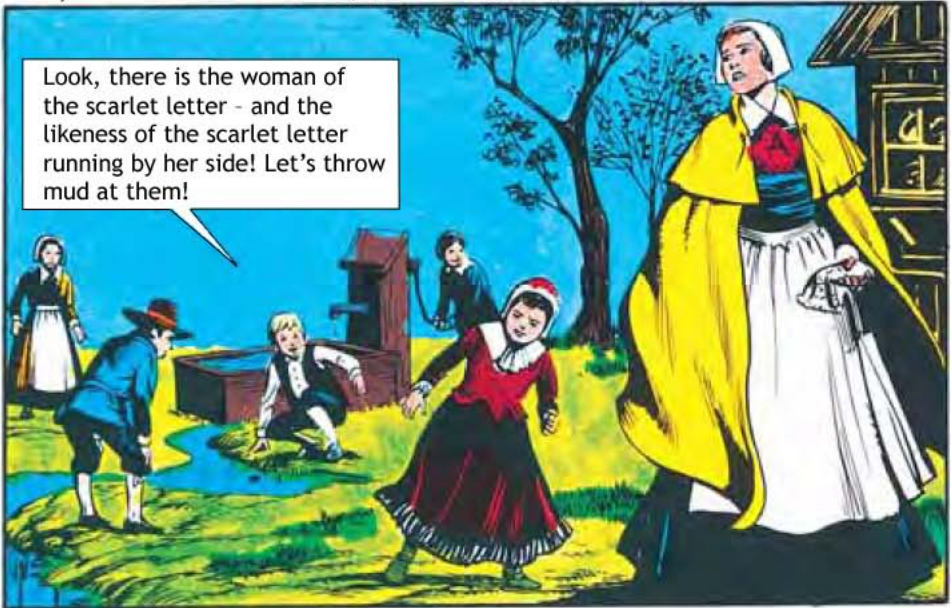
Hester and Pearl went one day, to Governor Bellingham's mansion.

Come, child. Let us deliver to the Governor these decorated gloves he ordered.



But Hester had another reason. She had heard that there were plans to take Pearl away from her, to give her wiser and better care.

Pearl was dressed in a red velvet dress decorated with gold thread. As they came into town, they passed a group of Puritan children.



But Pearl, after stamping her foot and shaking her fist, made a rush at her enemies, and they ran away.



Without further adventure, they reached Governor Bellingham's house.



On the wall of the great hall hung a row of pictures. Standing on the floor was a suit of armor, highly polished.





Hush, child! Come away. The Governor and his guests are coming.





The Governor and his guests entered the hall.

This is the child about whom we spoke. . . and her unhappy mother, Hester Prynne!

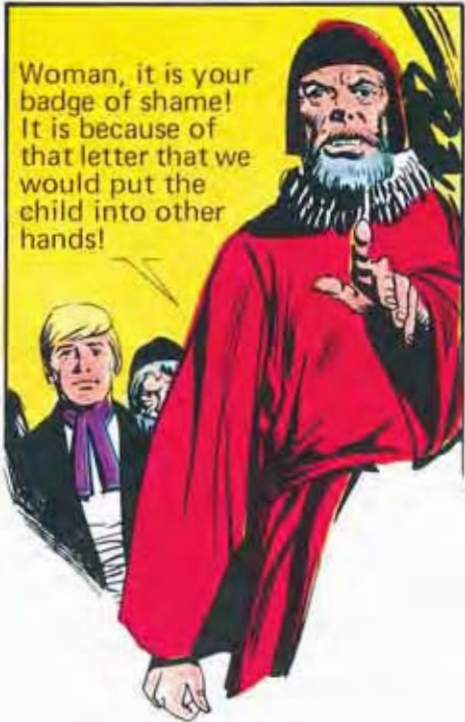
We might have guessed that her mother must be a scarlet woman! We will look into this matter.



What can
you do
for the
child?



I can teach her
what I have
learned from
this badge! It
daily teaches me
lessons from
which my child
may be the wiser
and better.



Woman, it is your
badge of shame!
It is because of
that letter that we
would put the
child into other
hands!

God gave me the child, in place of
all the other things I have lost!
She is both my punishment and
my reward. You shall not take
her!



My poor
woman, she
will be well
cared for. . . .

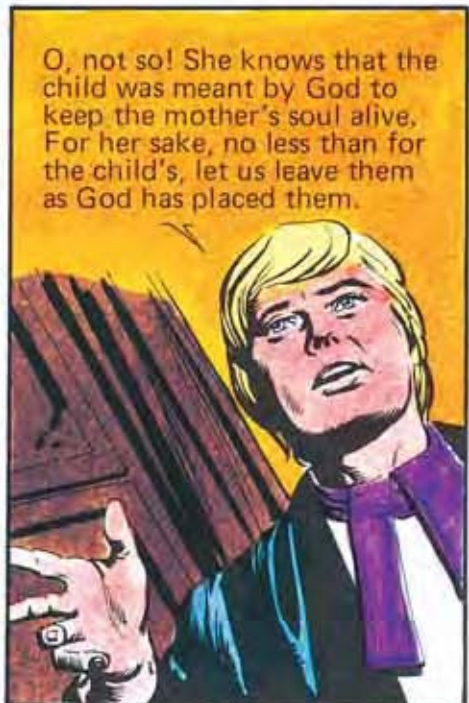
I will not give
her up! I will
die first!



By a sudden impulse, Hester turned to the young clergyman, Mr. Dimmesdale.

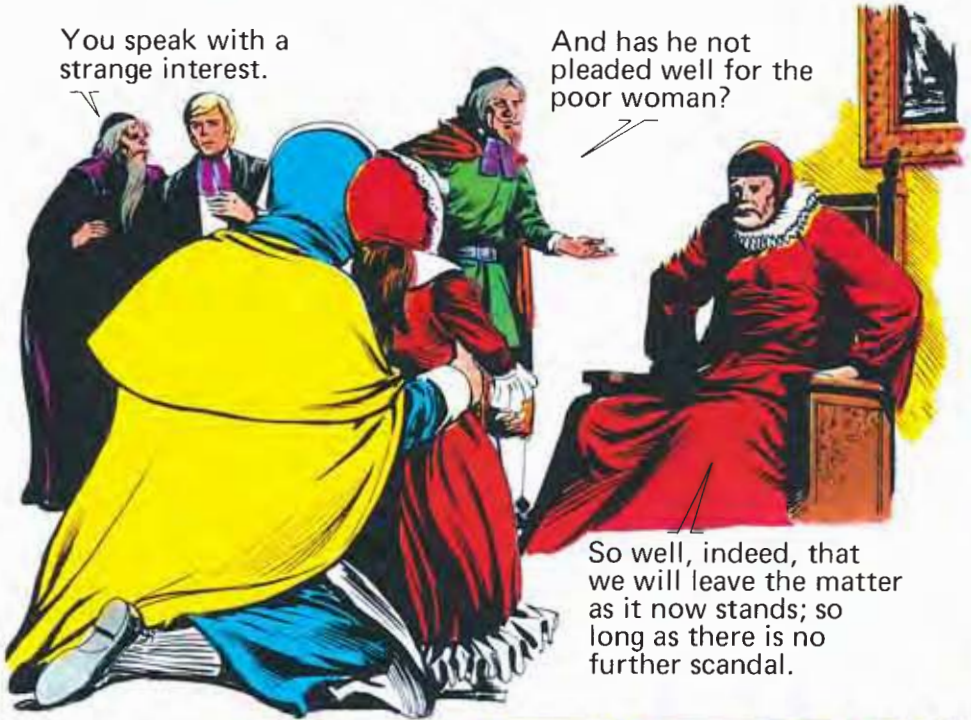


He stepped forward, pale and holding his hand over his heart as was his habit when disturbed.



You speak with a strange interest.

And has he not pleaded well for the poor woman?



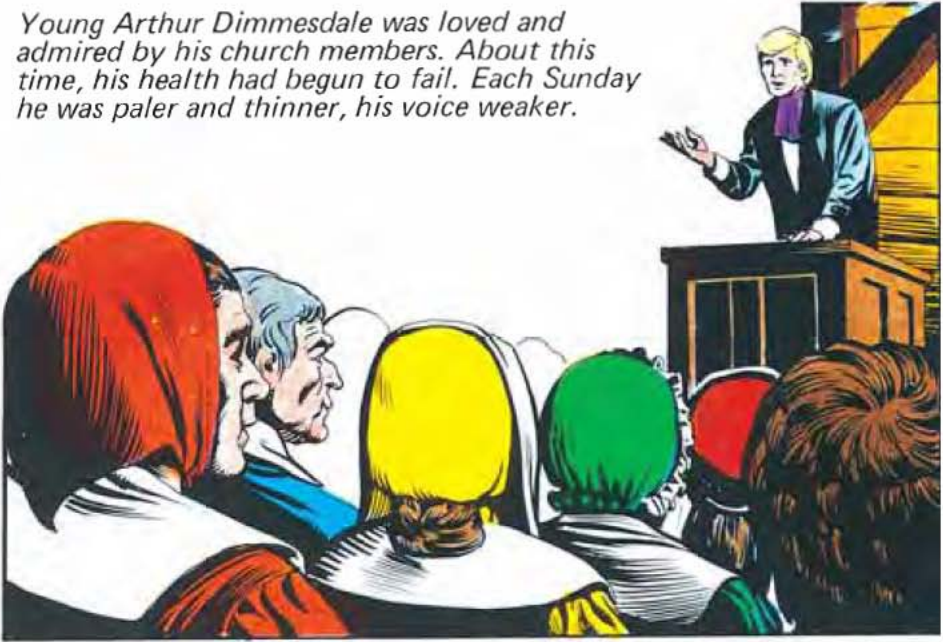
So well, indeed, that we will leave the matter as it now stands; so long as there is no further scandal.

In those days everyone believed in witches and wizards, and a devil who was everywhere. Mistress Hibbins, the Governor's bad-tempered sister, was called a witch; and it is said that she leaned from an upper window as Hester left the house.

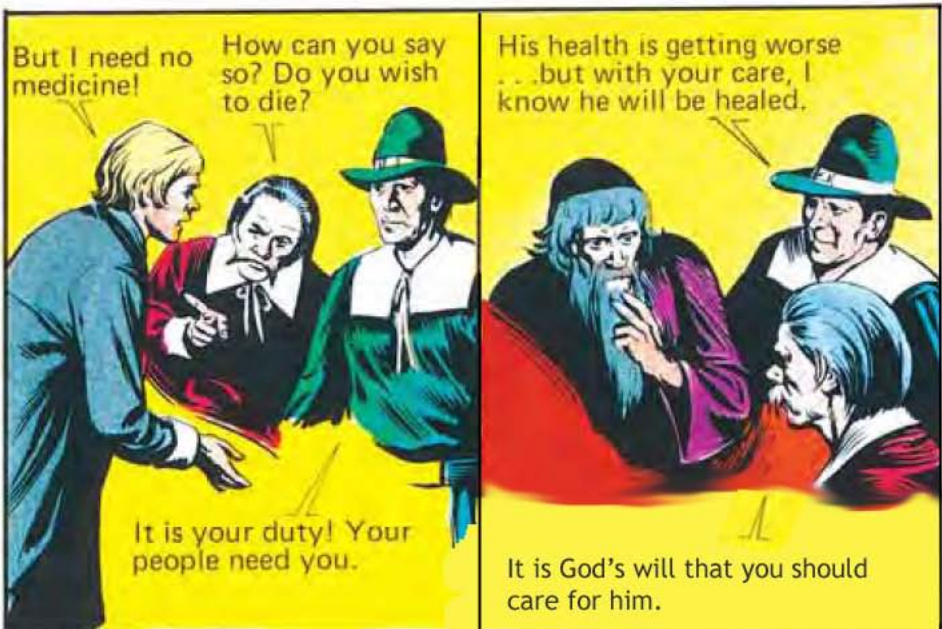


Pearl had saved her mother from the devil's trap, proving what the young minister said was true.

Young Arthur Dimmesdale was loved and admired by his church members. About this time, his health had begun to fail. Each Sunday he was paler and thinner, his voice weaker.



The people looked on Roger Chillingworth as a miracle meant to save their beloved pastor since he had great knowledge in medicine. The church elders arranged for Chillingworth to care for Dimmesdale.

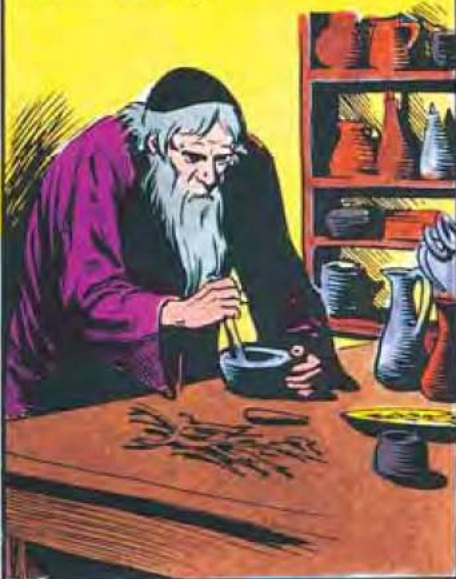


It was arranged for them to have a room in the same house, so that the doctor might keep a constant eye on his patient.

Mr. Dimmesdale had a front apartment.



On the other side of the house, Chillingworth arranged his study and laboratory.



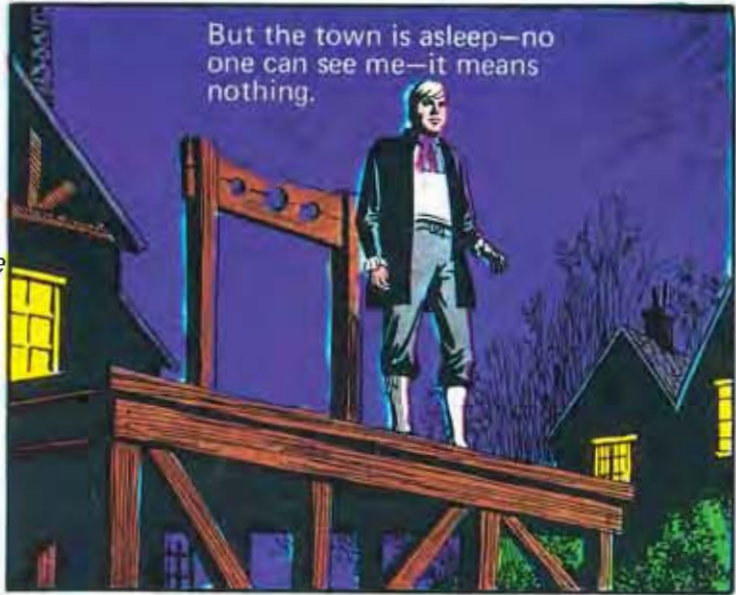
But as the years passed, Dimmesdale became more troubled, more ill. He often had visions and nightmares during the night.



Now it was a heard of devilish shapes that grinned and haunted him...

Now a group of shining angels, who unhappily flew upward...

On one such night, dark and cloudy, in early May, Dimmesdale quietly dressed himself and left the house. As if in a dream, he made his way to that same scaffold where Hester Prynne had stood seven years ago.



Suddenly he shouted . . . a cry that went ringing through the night.



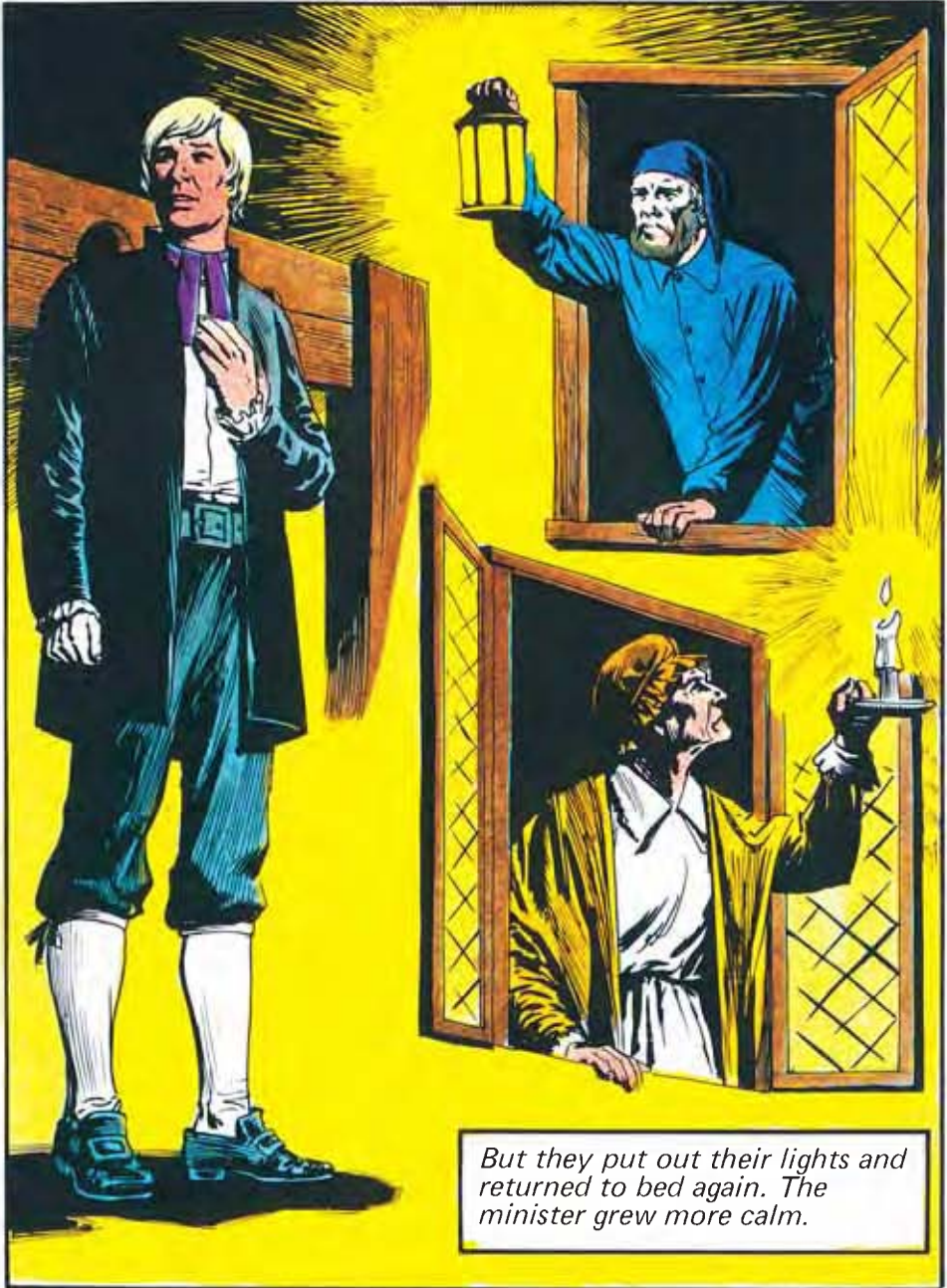
The whole town will rush out and find me here!



He covered his face and waited for discovery.



But it was not so. The town did not awake. He opened his eyes and looked around. In Governor Bellingham's house, the governor stood at one window looking out. At another window, Mistress Hibbins stuck out her head.



But they put out their lights and returned to bed again. The minister grew more calm.

Then he saw a little, flickering light, coming up the street. It was someone carrying a lantern.

It threw a light on a windowpane. . . .



. . . and then a pump with its water tank. . . .



. . . and then, coming closer, a door of oak.



It was the Reverend Wilson returning from some errand—and now he would surely look up and see Dimmesdale!



But he passed by and away down the street with never a look upward! Dimmesdale laughed in relief. . . and a light, childish laugh answered him!





Come up again, and we will all three stand together!



Hester held Pearl by one hand. The minister took the other hand, and felt a rush of life pouring through his veins, as if the three of them formed an electric chain.



Will you stand here
with mother and
me, tomorrow at
noon?



No, my child.
Someday,
indeed, but not
tomorrow!

*Pearl laughed and tried to pull
away her hand but he held it tight.*

A moment longer,
my child!



But will you promise to take my
hand, and mother's hand,
tomorrow at noon?

Not then, Pearl,
but another
time.

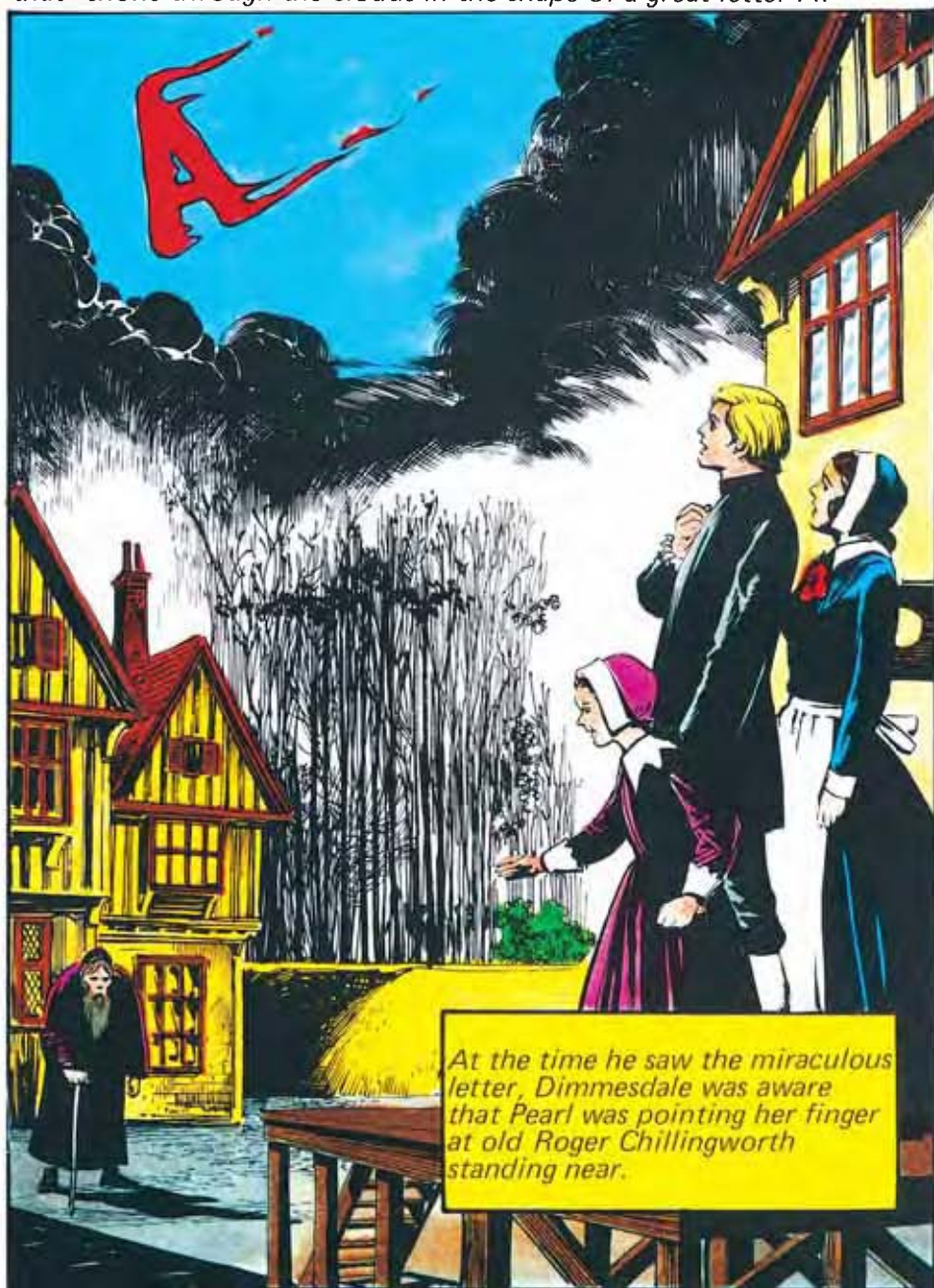


And what
other time?

At the great
judgment day, we
must stand
together before
God. But not in
the daylight of
the world!



But before he had finished speaking, a light filled the sky, lighting the scene with the clearness of midday—as if it were the daylight that would unite all who belong together. And the meteor —if it were that—shone through the clouds in the shape of a great letter A!



So real was his impression that, in the deep darkness after the meteor had vanished, Chillingworth's face still seemed painted on the blackness.



Good Master Dimmesdale, can this be you! You dream while awake and walk in your sleep! Come, my friend, let me take you home.



I was at the deathbed of Governor Winthrop. After he died, I was going home. Come with me now, or you will hardly be able to speak tomorrow.



So Dimmesdale gave in to the doctor and was led away.

Yet the next day, he gave a talk which was held to be the richest and most powerful he had ever preached. Afterward as he came down the pulpit steps, the church watchman met him.

Your glove, sir. It was found this morning on the scaffold, where evil doers are set up. No doubt the devil dropped it there as a bad joke!

Thank you, my friend. Yes, it seems to be my glove!



Did you hear of the sign that was seen last night? A great red letter in the sky. . . .



The letter A, which we think stands for Angel. As our good Governor Winthrop was made an angel last night, it was fitting that there should be some notice!



No, I had not heard of it.

During the past seven years, Hester's place in the community had changed. By doing her work well, she earned a living for herself and Pearl. She never complained when treated badly.

None was more ready to give to the poor.



When there was illness or trouble, she brought help and comfort.



On the night of their strange meeting, she was shocked at Mr. Dimmesdale's condition. Made strong by her own years of trouble, she felt better able to deal with Roger Chillingworth than on that time long ago in the prison room. She promised herself to talk to her former husband.



One afternoon walking with Pearl, she saw the old doctor looking for roots and herbs.



Run and play on the beach while I talk with the doctor.



I would speak a word with you.

Ah! Is it Mistress Hester that has a word for old Roger Chillingworth?



Once again, Hester was shocked to see the change that had taken place in a man in the past seven years.

What do you see in my face, that you stare so?



Never mind. It is of the minister I would speak.

When we last spoke together, seven years ago, I promised to keep secret that you had been my husband.



What choice had you? My finger pointed at the minister would have thrown him into prison—perhaps even had him hanged!

It would have been better that he died at once than to have his worst enemy, unknown at his side!



Yes, you are right! Never has a man suffered more!

Now, I must tell him, no matter what you do! This way there is no good for him—no good for me, no good for you!



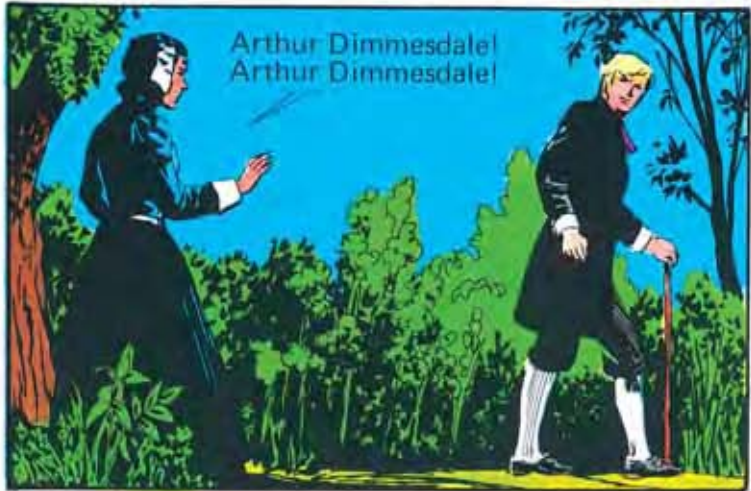
Hester, if you had met me earlier with a better love than mine, this evil would not have happened! I pity you for the good that has been wasted in you!

And I you, for the hatred that has turned a good man to an evil man.



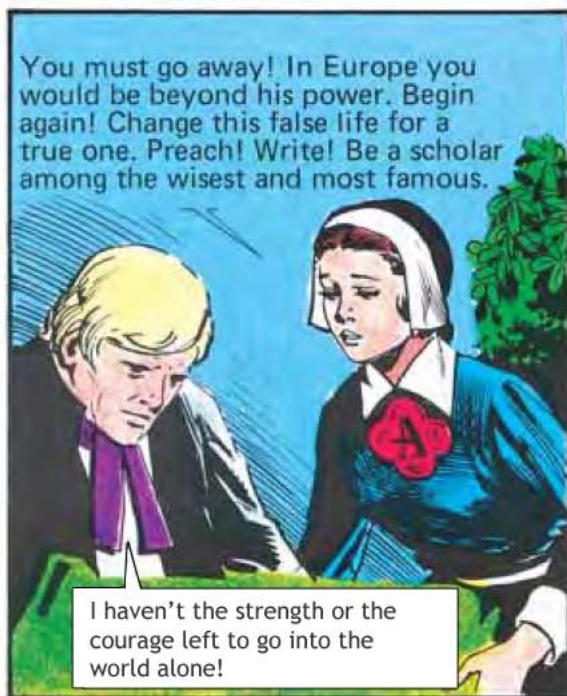
So one day soon after, Hester set out to meet Dimmesdale, who would be returning through the forest from a visit to his Indian converts. When she heard him coming, she sent Pearl to play along the brook.

She called, quietly at first and then louder.



Together they moved back into the shadow of the woods and sat on a bank of moss.

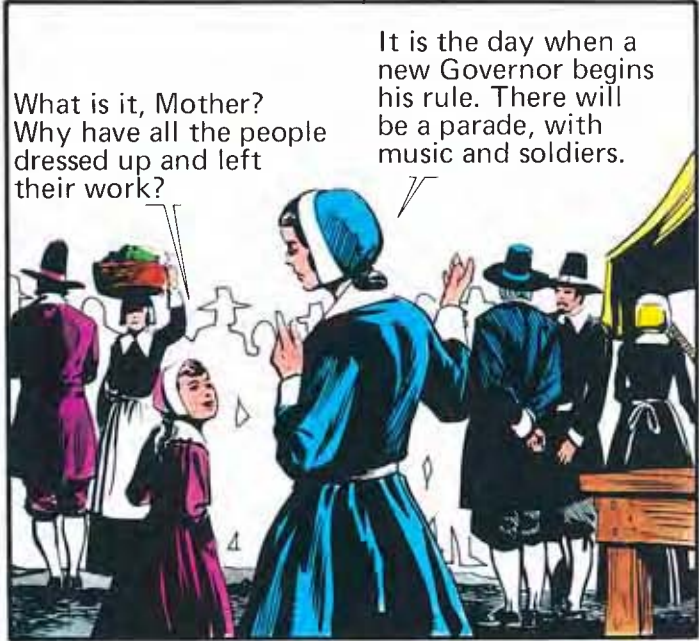




Both understood.

Once they made the decision to leave, they began to make plans. Hester knew the captain of a ship that was to sail for Bristol, England, in three days. Hester would get tickets for Dimmesdale, Pearl, and herself without telling anyone in the town. They would sail the day after Election Day which was a great holiday.

Early on the morning of Election Day, Hester and Pearl came into the marketplace.



A party of Indians and a group of sailors added color to the Puritan crowd. Pearl danced about like a butterfly, among them.



As always, people stepped back from Hester Prynne, leaving a sort of magic circle around her. So she was alone when the ship's captain came up to her.



Why you must know! This doctor here—Chillingworth—tells me he is one of your group.



At that moment she saw Chillingworth across the marketplace smiling at her—a smile of secret and fearful meaning.



Before she could think of what to do, she heard the sound of music. The parade was beginning!



After the music and the soldiers came the judges. Then came the young minister, looking tall and stronger than any had seen him before—and at the same time spiritual, withdrawn.



The parade and most of the crowd entered the meetingplace. The minister began his sermon. Hester stood statue-like, at the foot of the scaffold, near enough to hear his voice.



The holy minister in the church—the woman of the scarlet letter in the marketplace! Who could have imagined that the same sin was on them both!

The sermon ended. The people were overcome with its greatness. The parade began to march back to the town hall. But the shouts of the crowd died to murmurs as they saw the minister again. How feeble and pale he looked!



The Reverend Wilson offered his arm. Governor Bellingham hurried to help.

But the minister waved them away. He had stopped beside Hester and little Pearl.



He turned towards the scaffold and stretched out his arms.



The child flew to him and wrapped her arms about his knees. Hester drew slowly near.



Suddenly Chillingworth pushed through the crowd and whispered to him.



Devil, you are too late. I will get away from you now.



The crowd was shocked. Those near the minister were so surprised that they did nothing. They saw the minister, helped by Hester, climb the scaffold steps.



There is no place in the world you could have escaped me, except on this very scaffold!



Isn't this a better escape than we planned? Hester, I am a dying man. Let me hurry to take my shame upon me!



People of New England—you who have loved me and thought me holy—look on a sinner! Look at the letter Hester wears—you have shaken at it!



But one who lived with you wore the scarlet letter hidden. Hester's is just a shadow of his own—God's hidden judgment on a sinner. Look!



With a shaking motion, he tore away the front of his shirt. The letter was seen by everyone.



Then, down he sank upon the scaffold!



Pearl, will you
kiss me now?



*Pearl kissed him and her tears fell
upon her father's cheek.*



Hester,
farewell!

Won't we meet
again? Won't we
be together in
heaven?



God alone knows; and he
is merciful! His will be
done! Farewell!



*The final word came forth with
his dying breath. The crowd broke
out in a strange, deep sound of
wonder.*

After several days had passed, people tried to arrange their thoughts. There were three ideas as to what had been seen on the scaffold.



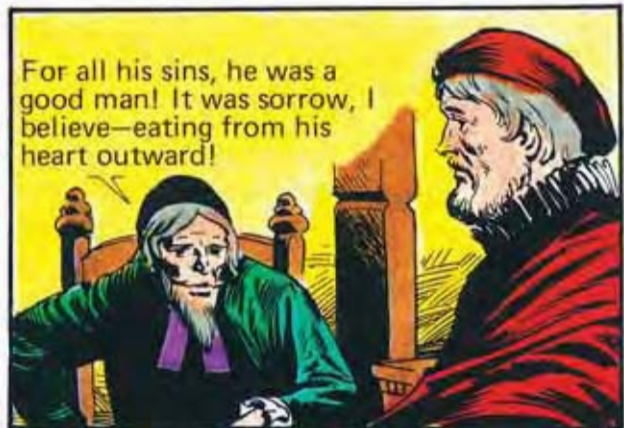
Marked himself with a secret letter A!



No, no! I say old Roger Chillingworth caused it to appear, with his magic and his drugs!



Reverend Wilson had a kinder explanation.



Nothing was stranger than the change in Chillingworth, who seemed to dry up. He died within the year, leaving Governor Bellingham and the Reverend Wilson in charge of his will.



So little Pearl became the richest heiress of her day in New England. If she stayed there, she might later have wed the son of the holiest Puritan among them! But soon after the doctor's death, Hester and Pearl sailed away.



For many years, few reports came from across the sea. The story of the scarlet letter became a legend. In all those years no one went into Hester's home. Then one afternoon, children playing nearby saw a tall woman in a gray robe come up to the cottage door.

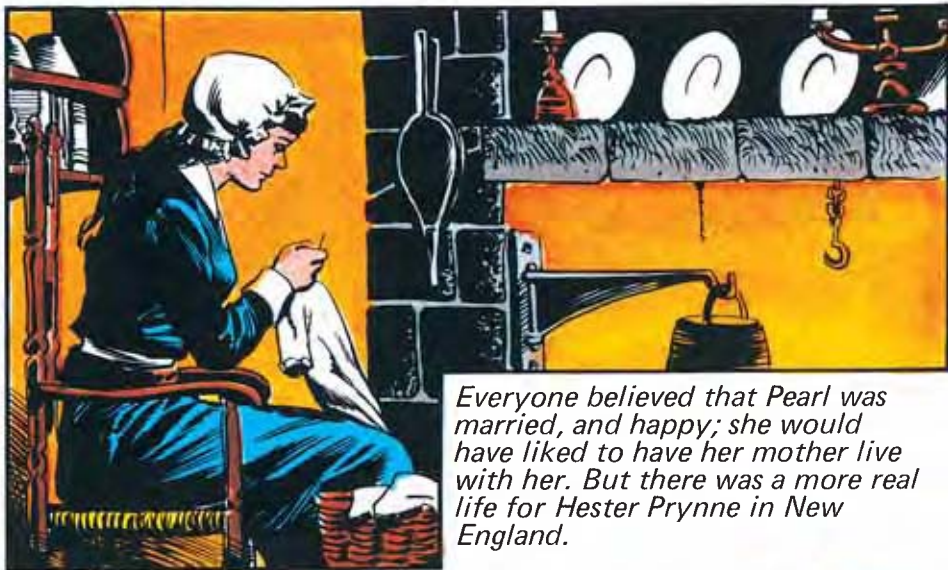


She turned for a moment—showing a scarlet letter on her breast!



Hester Prynne had come back to live in New England. But where was little Pearl who must now be a woman. No one learned for sure. But for the rest of her life Hester received letters and other signs of love from someone in another land.

Letters came with the names of rich people on them. In the cottage were things of comfort which only wealth could have brought, and love have thought of. Once, Hester was seen decorating a baby dress of rich cloth.



Everyone believed that Pearl was married, and happy; she would have liked to have her mother live with her. But there was a more real life for Hester Prynne in New England.

People told her their sorrows and worries, and asked her advice—women, especially.



But why? Why must women be so unhappy, so punished, so unfree?



Hester helped them as best she could.



After many more years, a new grave was dug in the burial-ground, near an old and sunken one. One tombstone served for both.

The only mark on the tombstone was a large red letter "A" on a black background.



The Scarlet Letter

The Scarlet Letter takes place in 17th century Puritan New England. Read along with this touching tale of Hester Prynne and her daughter Pearl as they struggle to survive as outcasts. Only one person, Arthur Dimmesdale, the Reverend, knows Hester's true story, but he is kept away for fear of what the community will think of him. Find out how Hester turns hardship into the ability to help the very people who scorned her.



SADDLEBACK
EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING

Three Watson

Irvine, CA 92618-2767

Website: www.sdlback.com

Saddleback eBook